

On the Compilation of Business English Reading Textbooks under the Guidance of National Standards of Teaching Quality for Undergraduate Business English Majors

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Abstract: In reference to the *National Standards of Teaching Quality for Undergraduate Business English Majors* issued by the Chinese Ministry of Education, this article holds that the publishing of Business English Reading textbooks should emphasize the following five aspects: 1) reflecting the requirements for talent cultivation in the National Standards; 2) compiling textbooks based on the principle of "theme plus interaction"; 3) giving consideration to the "integration of course and certificates"; (4) building multi-modal and three-dimensional teaching materials; and 5) enhancing cooperation of publishers, schools and industries. This research result can also give reference to the publishing of other teaching materials.

Keywords: Business English Reading; National Standards of Teaching Quality for Undergraduate Business English Majors; textbook compilation; textbook publishing.

INTRODUCTION

When the Chinese Ministry of Education approved the establishment of Business English as an undergraduate course in the spring of 2007, the development of Business English has become more and more rapid.

The scale of teaching has been steadily improved, and the quality of discipline construction has been continuously improved, cultivating a large number of business English talents who are not only familiar with international business practice but also proficient in English language and culture.

Business English education is inseparable from teachers' education, curriculum design, textbook publishing, teaching methods and testing, etc. Textbook publishing, as an important part of business English education, is the main carrier of teaching and learning. To a certain extent, it affects the contents and methods of business English teaching and the cultivation of students' business knowledge and practical business abilities.

Meanwhile, effective knowledge input is very important for language learning, without which students would not understand language correctly or master related professional knowledge. Reading, as one of the most important means of knowledge input, plays a very important role in business English teaching and learning. At present, the study of Business English

Reading textbooks is mostly included in the study of Business English textbooks as a whole, and there are few researches specifically designed for Business English Reading textbooks. With the publication of the *National Standards of Teaching Quality for Undergraduate Business English Majors* (hereinafter referred to as NSBEM), it is of great necessity and significance to carry out a study on the compilation and publishing of Business English Reading textbooks.

CURRENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS

Currently, the textbooks of Business English Reading are mainly divided into three categories: English photocopies imported from abroad; textbooks adapted by domestic scholars according to the original textbooks; unpublished textbooks compiled by teachers. Statistics show that the number of publications of Business English Reading textbooks increased steadily before 2017, showing an upward trend year by year. There are a variety of Business English Reading textbooks with innovative ideas in compiling. However, there are still some problems.

Too many books to choose from

At present, there are many series of textbooks for Business English majors. According to incomplete statistics, there are 12 kinds of textbooks designed for undergraduates, five kinds for vocational school students, and two series for such exams as the National Business English Test and Cambridge Business English Certificate [1]. These books are numerous but of uneven quality. It seems that teachers have many choices. But, in the face of a large number of similar textbooks, teachers are often too difficult to make a smart choice.

Excessive copying materials with great difficulty

At the beginning, a large number of foreign textbooks were introduced to meet the needs of Business English teaching. However, in a few textbookstoo much reading materials were directly copied from foreign newspapers and periodicals without taking into account the linguistic competence and limited knowledge of domestic Business English majors. At present, in the two-class teaching once a week, it is difficult for teachers to explain the content in the original newspapers and periodicals into comprehensible inputto help students acquire professional knowledge of Business English, master Business English skills and cultivate their Business English abilities. In fact, Business English Reading textbooks should be rationally adjusted according to the requirements of NSBEM and the current conditions of Business English teaching.

Too few reference books

Despite the large number of Business English Reading textbooks, there are just a few tutorials or teachers'books. Up till now, the authors have only found about 10 tutorial books, the earliest of which was written in 2005.

Low-quality exercises and answers

In the authors' teaching practice, it's found that the practice of some Business English Reading textbooks are relatively simple, and it is difficult to cultivate the comprehensive business ability of Business English majors. In addition, there are many problems in the E-C translation exercises and their answers. This shows that the teachers who compiled these textbooks might not have received professional training in translation theory and practice. Their knowledge about Business English translation theory and practice is not sufficient enough. This is why there are such problems as incorrect understanding of the original texts, unprofessional translation of terms, inaccurate expression in the target language, errors and omissions.

COMPILING PRINCIPLES

NSBEM aims to cultivate application-oriented talents who have solid basic English skills, international vision and humanistic accomplishment, with a mastery

of linguistics, economics, management, international business law and other related basic theories and knowledge, abilities in English language usage, business practice, cross-cultural communication, etc [2]. Moreover, NSBEM urges students to be familiar with international business rules and practices, and be able to think, to innovate, to learn independently, and to engage in international business [2].It clearly defines the orientation of business English majors, the personnel training objectives, curriculum design, quality control, teacher development, etc. Thus, NSBEM is of important guiding significance and reference for the compilation of Business English Reading textbooks. In order to meet the requirements of NSBEM, the compilation of Business English Reading textbooks should be guided by the following five principles:

Reflecting the requirements for talent cultivation in NSBEM

NSBEMpoints out that undergraduates in Business English should have five qualities: ideological, professional, vocational, cultural, physical and mental; five kinds of knowledge: linguistic, business, cross-cultural, humanities and social sciences, and interdisciplinary; and five abilities: English usage, intercultural communication, business practice, critical thinking and innovation, and autonomous learning [2]. Therefore, when compiling textbooks of Business English Reading, compilers should take as the training objectives the five qualities, five kinds of knowledge and five abilities. For example, textbooks should include Chinese and foreign literature and culture, Chinese and foreign business culture, the general survey of English-speaking countries, international politics and economy, foreign affairs and diplomacy knowledge, economic management, international finance and marketing knowledge, corporate management knowledge, computer technology knowledge, etc. In order to cultivate students' five qualities, compilers of textbooks should consider incorporating innovative exploration or inspirational stories of business elites, which cultivate not only students' language ability, but also their moral character, vision, sense of responsibility, team spirit, innovativeness and entrepreneurial spirit.

Compiling textbooks based on the principle of "theme plus interaction"

The traditional teaching concepts in China often neglect students'subjective initiative and lacks interaction in teaching. It is difficult to arouse students' enthusiasm for learning and to cultivate their practical abilities and innovative consciousness conducive to their Business English communicative ability. In the teaching of Business English Reading, teachers should advocate the teaching concept of "theme plus interaction": that is, dividing the teaching content into several themes to facilitate students' understanding and mastery of business knowledge with enough teacher-

student interaction. In the design of Business English Reading textbooks, compilers should implement this concept of "theme plus interaction", in which the themes are concerned with international trade, international finance, international investment, international logistics, international insurance, international business law, international business marketing, international business office work, international business management, international business negotiation, international payment methods, international claims, international contracts, international recruitment, international business conferences, international business etiquette, intellectual property rights, e-commerce, international corporate culture, etc. In the compilation of textbooks, compilers can also design teaching contents based on international business activities such as business negotiation, order handling, etc., which are beneficial for students to cooperate with the teacher in case study, task teaching, role playing, teamwork and other teaching methods.

Giving consideration to the "integration of course and certificates"

The "integration of course and certificates" is to help students to get at least two certificates in the university, that is, in the same academic year, students can be awarded with the academic certificate and vocational qualification certificates to meet the needs of students, market, enterprises, and institutions. Nowadays, foreign trade enterprises are no longer simply emphasizing CET-4 and CET-6 certificates or TEM-4 and TEM-8 certificates, but to special certificates that can prove students' professional competence in Business English, such as Cambridge Business English Certificate, E-Commerce Certificate, Certificate for International Business Documents, Customs Clearance Certificate, etc. Therefore, compilers of Business English Reading textbook should select intermediate and advanced reading material from BEC examinations to familiarize students with it; or consider compiling in the reading materials texts and exercises relating to exams for the above-mentioned certificates, helping students better grasp actual business English abilities they need, and arousing their motivation to realize the win-win effect of "integration of course and certificates".

Building multi-modal and three-dimensional teaching materials

In the digital era, with the accelerating development of digital publishing, digital publications are growing rapidly and it is of great significance to develop multi-modal three-dimensional textbooks [3]. Different from traditional printed textbooks, three-dimensional textbooks include audio, video, PPT, Word documents, interactive software that provides real business scenarios and scientific evaluation methods. Three-dimensional textbooks are more attractive in

form and more interesting in content. Learners can choose different learning ways according to their language levels, interests and time to carry out flexible and autonomous learning. Electronic textbooks and digital textbooks can be updated more quickly, providing students with the latest business English newspapers, abstracts, information, so that students can be familiar with the latest business English vocabulary and concepts, understanding the latest changes and trends in professional business more quickly. The 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Press and Publishing Industry in 2016 urges to speed up the digitization of resources, intelligentization of digital content and knowledge, research, development and application of management, presentation, storage, etc. Therefore, it should be recognized that digital publishing is not to convert the original print format into a digital format that can be read by reading terminals, but to take full account of the audience and the advantages of digital textbooks to better achieve interactive learning and personalized education [4]. In addition, students in universities or colleges can also use language learning centers, video-on-demand centers to download or watch online a variety of related video programs or micro courses. Through online interaction, learners can share and discuss the learning content, learn independently through information retrieval to achieve in-depth reading and understanding.

Enhancing cooperation of publishers, schools and industries

At present, there are many textbooks for Business English Reading, but with uneven quality. The publishing industry should survey the market demand, give full play to the advantages of information and publishing channels, select or organize experienced teachers to compile textbooks of Business English Reading for quality control. When editing the manuscript of Business English Reading, the editors should guide the overall design, the specific content and the degree of difficulty in selected materials, so as not only to ensure its readability, but also to control its quality to meet the needs of current teaching of Business English Reading and meet students' needs for business communication and practical business applications.

The theoretical research of business English often lags behind the practical application [5]. After more than two decades, it's still the case in China. Therefore, only those scholars who have been engaged in the study of Business English theory for a long time and have mastered the latest developments in international business can compile a better textbook of Business English Reading. As the main force in compiling Business English Reading textbooks, scholars should abide by the training objectives of Business English majors in light of the actual needs of students' employment and the actual requirements of

enterprises and institutions. According to NSBEM, the proportion of professional Business English teachers in language, business knowledge and business practice is 6:3:1. Therefore, the proportion of such specialized teachers in textbook compilation should also be 6:3:1, which means that language experts, business experts and entrepreneurs should all be engaged in the textbook compilation. More importantly, language experts with different professional backgrounds should be selected. For example, in compiling Business English translation exercises in Business English Reading textbooks, the editorial board should include teachers who have been engaged in Business English translation teaching for a long time to control the quality of reference answers, thus improving the overall quality of the textbook.

CONCLUSION

NSBEM sets clear standards and requirements for Business English majors in terms of its orientation, training objectives, curriculum design, teaching quality control and teacher development. It also has important guiding significance and reference values for the compilation of Business English Reading textbooks. According to the requirements of NSBEM, it is of great theoretical and practical significance to research on Business English Reading textbooks, which are important in Business English education. Implementing

the requirements of NSBEM to compile Business English Reading textbooks, we can cultivate interdisciplinary business English majors to meet their needs in line with the requirements of the new era of business to better serve the world's international business and promote the rapid development of economy and civilization around the globe.

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